

PROGRESS.

EDWARD S. CARTER, EDITOR.

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ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, FEB. 18.

STEPS TOWARD CIVIC REFORM.

Some of the electors of Queen's ward have set an example that might be followed with advantage by other districts in the city. A large number of the most prominent rate-payers have joined in a requisition to ex-almayor ROBERTSON to allow himself to be put in nomination as one of the representatives of Queen's ward for the approaching civic year. It appears to be a case of the office seeking the man, and Mr. ROBERTSON has been chosen because of his previous experience and his knowledge of civic affairs. The choice appears to be as good a one as could be made, and there can be little doubt that the nomination will be heartily ratified on election day.

There are other wards in which the same kind of a course should be taken. The people who have interests at stake and who are crying for civic reform too seldom put their words into action. They do not fix upon their candidates early in the campaign, and the result too often is that some undesirable man pushes himself to the front and is elected. Everybody recognizes the fact that he is not the man for the place, but he has the "inside track" and there is no opposition save by some other adventurer as ill fitted as he is to look after the interests of the city. It is very often a choice of evils, and the boldest grabber, or the man who can enlist the services of the heeled, is hoisted into a position that might be occupied by men of the best stamp in the community. Some of the loudest voiced men in the council to day have got there by just such means. They will probably get there again, because the citizens appear to take a very small amount of interest in the matter.

That the common council has some good men in it, and that it does not as a whole compare unfavourably with some other councils, is no reason why it should not be very considerably improved. So long as the present vicious system of ward elections is continued no complete reform can be expected, but if the electors of every ward would do as the electors of Queen's have done there would be a manifest change for the better. The principle of putting a man in and sitting in apathy while he renominates himself year after year, whether he is or is not fit for the position is one which can only result in keeping the personnel of the council down to a low grade. In a body of twenty six men there ought to be a fair proportion of members who could be thought of as fairly eligible for the position of mayor, by their knowledge, experience and ability, but there are not in this council. Out of those who represent the old city and North End there are not more than four who would be thought of in such a connection while there is not one from the West Side. With the other twenty-two there is either inexperience, ignorance, insincerity, coarseness or some other disqualification, which bars them from aspiring to be anything more than they are. In some cases indeed they should feel themselves to be lucky that the indifference of the electors has allowed them to even the position they hold. Some of them, a minority, are indeed well meaning enough but they are not of the stuff of which mayors can be made, even in St. John, where there have been some queer kinds of chief magistrates in the past.

If every ward would do its share in the first steps of reform, by sending the best available men, chosen early by responsible electors and backed by the better sentiment of the ward a great deal could be done that is not possible under the existing state of things. There is plenty of time for good men to be chosen this year in wards where they are needed, and if the electors will make a start, as Queen's has done, there will be a surprising change in the make-up of the new council. The matter is worth a great deal more thought than, it is to be feared, the average elector is likely to give it.

The theory of a radical and sweeping reform in civic affairs is well enough, but there are a good many difficulties in the way of carrying it out. The whole system of departments would need to be changed for instance, so as to narrow down the responsibility, and there are many other things for which legislation would be required. Until there is some prospect of a reorganization of the municipal body, the people must be content with what is possible, and the nearest approach to reform will be in sending good men to the council. The duty of doing this rests with the electors of each ward. Every man who wants reform should understand this, and act upon it.

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ECONOMY AND ART IN FUNERALS.

There are symptoms of a new fad in Boston, though as a matter of fact it is quite in order to make such a statement at frequent intervals every season. When Boston gets a fad it means business, whether anything is eventually accomplished or not, and it is quite immaterial to the Bostonese whether the subject is a new or an old one. It may relate to any period of time, from the inception of Buddhism to the date of Edison's latest invention, and it introduced under proper auspices it cannot fail to go. Just now the subject appears to be the incineration of human remains.

It is two years since a cremation society was formed in the city of culture, and its members are now coming to the front with the idea of making the movement more general. Being in Boston, the membership naturally comprises clergymen, authors, journalists, lawyers, doctors, cranks and strong minded women. Every body who has lived in Boston can understand just the kind of a crowd there would be, and a newspaper man without seeing the roll of membership, could name in advance the majority of those who would come to the front were there a meeting in Tremont Temple to discuss the subject.

The great lever with which the society for consuming their neighbors' remains is trying to move the public is a combination of the sanitary and artistic aspects of the question. It is pointed out that burying is decidedly unhealthy for the people who are not buried, and that the danger would be emphasized in the event of an epidemic such as the cholera. Then the danger is pointed out that as cities extend their borders graveyards are apt to be disturbed and the remains removed, which to the Boston mind must be a very disturbing thought indeed. Above all however, the Boston mind revels in the possible realization of "the glory of a great light and the purity of a great heat."

In support of the aesthetic view of cremation a writer in one of the Boston papers quotes a description of the process, in which is negated the popular idea that a body is burned when cremated. It is "incineration" or the reduction of the human frame to ashes in a retort. The account gives a roseate poetry to the furnace which is lacking in the every-day grave interment. "As the door of the retort is opened," it says, "the in-rushing air cools it from white to red heat and the whole interior is filled with a rosy light that is fascinating to the eye. The body, decently clad for burial, is laid in a crib which is covered with a white sheet soaked in alum. The crib is then put into the retort. The sheet retains its original position and conceals the form until nothing but the bones are left and then gently crumbles into dust as under the mystic touch of an invisible agent."

Such an artistic process ought to suit the Bostonian taste, and it is not surprising to learn that nearly all the members of such learned associations as the Nineteenth Century club and the Sarosis are advocates of this fascinating method of having their mortality resolved into ashes. And it may be added that an additional and substantial argument is based on the fact that the cost of incineration is placed at the ridiculously low price of twenty five dollars per corpse. The present would appear to be a favourable time in which to get up clubs.

SOME LENTEN THOUGHTS.

Lent—the lengthening of the days, the spring-tide—has come again, and the greater part of the christian world is observing it as a time in which to refrain from the gaieties of life in memory of Him who was made man, who suffered and was buried. Year by year the deference paid to this penitential season becomes more general among the denominations, and outwardly at least there is a recognition of the solemn character of the period which the church of old ordained as a time of fasting and prayer.

There are many ways of keeping Lent, from the mere outward conformity with what is "the correct thing" by butterflies of fashion, to the austere devotion which is in line with the precepts of the catholic faith wherever found. There are those who welcome the season because it means a rest and a curtailment of expenditure in society circles, while there are others from whose hearts proceed the constant supplications of the Miserere. There are some who feel they can be good christians whatever they eat or drink, while with others it is a matter of conscience to martyr their bodies by fasting that the spirituality of their natures may deepen and their souls purified for a closer and more constant communion with their god. Many and diverse are the views that are taken of Lent, and far apart indeed are the various motives and methods through

and by which it is observed. It is a matter of education and environment. The sturdy protestant repels the idea that he is under any obligation to observe this particular season unless he chooses to do so, and declares that his Bible enjoins no such season. The faithful catholic, on the contrary, observes Lent, not because he has decided that it is right and necessary, but because the church commands it, and he obeys the command, just as he accepts the Bible and the creeds, as given by an authority that he cannot question. Yet wide apart are the two methods of reasoning, each class of believers may feel their conscience satisfied with the assurance that they are keeping "a good Lent."

Too many of us are prone to judge our neighbors, but Lent, of all seasons, is the time when such a tendency should be restrained. It is then we should judge ourselves. It is then our prayer should be for enlightenment to see ourselves as God sees us, and so to resist our sins that in the last day we may be judged in mercy. It is the season for retrospection, for unsparring self-examination in the light of God's commandments, for putting on anew the armor to preserve us from the deadly sins, for seeking pardon for the past and purposing amendment for the future. Whatever be our creed, this much, at least, all of us may do, whether our church enjoins or aids us in our efforts, or whether we unaided, save by our individual conviction, seek a closer fellowship with our Maker.

To many natures Lent is a welcome season. Men who long for a life of more constant and deeper spirituality than their ordinary avocations permit, find a want of their souls in part supplied during the period which the world has consented to set apart, it only imperfectly, as a time when some of its distractions may be avoided. The man whose bread is dependent on his daily toil may not have the boon of a retreat, but there is increased opportunity for him to fix his mind upon things which are beyond the petty joys and sorrows of the present—above the strife and ambition which possess his nature in the selfish struggles of life. "Remember, man, that thou art dust; and unto dust thou shalt return," should have its meaning to us for more than one day in the year, teaching us to see more clearly than the ashes of mortality the cross which tells that death is swallowed up in victory. Day by day throughout the season of penitence the thoughtful mind pictures in the gloom the cross and its burden, and the words are heard, "This have I done for thee. What hast thou done for Me?"

To him alone who keeps a good Lent comes fully the joy of the Easter morning, the brightest day in all the Christian year, the day of all days when man is brought to realize the grandeur of immortality—the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

It is the singular lot of an old man in New York to be dependent on the charity of his friends while he is the owner of more than enough money to support him in comfort for the rest of his days. His name is CHARLES H. SANFORD, and until a few years ago there is every reason to believe he was the possessor of a snug sum of money, \$17,000 of which was locked up in the vaults of a safe deposit company. One day in June, 1889, he started out in full possession of his health and faculties with \$2,000 which he intended to add to the deposit. He returned to his lodgings in a dazed condition, with his pocket book and safe deposit box key gone. He had apparently been drugged and robbed, and his mind has never been clear since that time. He was a man without family or business connections, and when the pocket book and key were lost there were no means by which his few friends could prove his claim. His money is safe enough, but he cannot get it without proofs of his identity which he, on account of his mental condition, is not in a position to furnish. A lawyer has taken the case in hand and hopes to compel the company to disgorge. The case is one of the odd happenings which are quite possible with a stranger in any of the great cities of the world.

One of the peculiar things about the observance of Valentine's Day is that it has very little connection with the worthy saint whose name it bears. SAINT VALENTINE was beheaded 1623 years ago, in the reign of the Emperor CLAUDIUS and while a man noted for his love and charity, has, of himself, no relation to the love missives sent out on his festival. That is a relic of pagan Rome, when the names of young women were placed in a box, and taken therefrom by the young men as chance might direct. The early church, unable to wholly eradicate the custom, reformed it, and the custom of choosing "valentines" among the maidens, and sending them tokens of affection, was begun, continuing in a modified form to these times. The sending of insulting pictures and verses under the name of valentines is a custom of very modern times, which will some day be frowned out of existence in decent society. It is as mean an act to try to wound others by anonymous letters on the fourteenth of February as on any other day of the year.

An English specialist relates some remarkable instances of the effect of emotions on the senses. In one instance a lady became absolutely deaf from suddenly seeing her husband in the act of cutting his throat.

The sudden shock of seeing a husband's dead body when she supposed him alive and well caused a similar loss of hearing with another lady. Any great mental shock or strain may cause deafness, or a loss of some other of the senses. It is quite easy to believe this. The shock of meeting a creditor on the street has caused many a man to become so blind that he has turned into the nearest doorway without recognizing him, and in the same way men have been so suddenly afflicted with deafness as to be unable to hear men who were calling aloud while vainly striving to overtake them. The English specialist should tell us something we do not know.

In the researches of the present age a great many cherished historical beliefs have been proved to be without good foundation, and now comes the remarkable statement that the original color of the Irish flag and the national color of Erin was not green but blue. The "harp without a crown" was on a blue ground until what are comparatively modern times, and the blue in the British union jack was added at the time of the union of Great Britain and Ireland. Green is the color of Ireland now, however, and green it is likely to remain, whatever the sticklers for accuracy may have to say about the matter.

Some of the United States papers continue to stir up the question of the annexation of Canada. There is no law to prevent a child crying for the moon, if it wants to, but the obtaining possession of that luminary is quite another affair. The statements of a few industrious cranks like GOLDWIN SMITH and FARRAR should not be accepted by our neighbors as the sentiments of the people of Canada. Give us a rest until the times are more ripe, and by that time the present generation will have ceased to be interested in the discussion.

JOYS AND WOES OF OTHER PLACES.

The Provincial Press Abroad. While standing in a door-way on Washington street this morning, what should we discern but that spicy paper, the Yarmouth Light, covering the basket of a Jew, which gives an idea of the extent of its circulation.—East Boston Cor. Yarmouth Light.

A South Ohio Man Almost Bathed. Mr. Asa Wyman had a very narrow escape from a hot water bath last evening. As he was going to the barn with a lantern in one hand and a boiler in the other, he very suddenly found himself seated on the ground. The water dashed around him but owing to his quick motions, he was soon on his feet receiving but a few dry drops.—Yar. Light.

CONDOLING WITH MRS. STEVENS.

Every Consideration Shown Her in Her Embarrassing Situation.

MONCTON, Feb. 16.—Mrs. H. T. Stevens has been committed for trial at the forthcoming term of the county court, on the charge of manslaughter, the stipendiary magistrate having exercised his authority to grant bail without a judge's order. Messrs H. T. Stevens, C. P. Harris and F. W. Sumner have entered into bonds of \$1,000 each, for the appearance of the accused at Dorchester, during the March sitting of the court. She is therefore free from restraint, and there, for the present, the matter rests. Public opinion has been divided into two distinct factions, one of which has been clamoring for Mrs. Stevens' incarceration in the police cells while she was under arrest, and inveigles bitterly against the crown having been a respecter of persons, compelling one person accused of forgery to remain in the cells, while awaiting trial, and allowing another charged with manslaughter to remain in her own house merely under guard, and surrounded by every luxury. These people, while they have a large amount of reason on their side, seem to forget that the police cells of Moncton are unfit for the occupation of a respectable horse, or dog, and would be a disgrace to a frontier town in Texas. Were the lock-up in Moncton an ordinarily decent one, more might be said in favor of treating all prisoners alike, but under existing circumstances the man or woman who could suggest confining a woman in such a place must be inhuman indeed.

The other faction chiefly composed of the upper ten, seem anxious to make up to Mrs. Stevens for any slight inconvenience she may have experienced from the unpleasant suspicion which rests upon her, and to endeavour if possible to help her to forget all about it. Indeed the outpourings of that christian charity so sadly lacking in the case of the wretched Buck, is not only truly gratifying but really amazing. Society ladies have called to inquire for the health of Mrs. Stevens, and to express their regret for the sad position in which she has been placed by an indiscriminating public who should have known better than to suspect a person in her social position, of anything at all. The greatest consideration has been shown for Mrs. Stevens and everything been done to prevent her from feeling any inconvenience or discomfort that could possibly be spared her, which is more than can be said of most persons under the same circumstances.

Correcting an Error.

A countryman stepped into a fruit shop and invested in five cents worth of chest-nuts. In half-an-hour he returned and handed the proprietor one of the nuts.

"What does this mean?" asked the dealer. "Well replied the customer, "that is the only sound chestnut I found in the pint, so I thought you put it in by mistake. I'm an honest man, and don't want to take a mean advantage of a fellow." J.T.B

POEMS WRITTEN FOR "PROGRESS" SAVED BY THE BREECHES BUOY.

Charlo Falls. Flashing back the sunlight In showers of sparkling spray; Leaping madly o'er the stones In its headlong way. Rocks and trees on either side, Branches meeting o'er the tide. Roaring like the thunder In its onward sweep, Pouring ever downward O'er the rocky steep. But below the quiet waters, Wearing with their furious race, Calmly lie, with scarce a ripple To disturb their placid face. While the trees, tall and majestic, The great rocks which guard the pool, And the blue sky, all are mirrored In their depth so dark and cool.

Then out again The ripples run, Laughing gaily In the sun; Kissing pebbles Round and white, Singing sweetly With delight; Sparkling brightly, Leaping lightly, Dancing in their joyous glee, On their way to join the sea. ANEL WODYAL.

Summer. Oh! summer-time of lovely flowers Of gentle gales, of scented bowers— Sweet perfume lingers everywhere! In blossoms sweet of fruits so fair; The meadows, where the new mown hay Scents the air all through the day.

The sky with clouds of azure blue Each day brings us beauties new; Lovely river flowing by Bears the breeze of summer night; Birds of beauty, singing free, Carrol songs in joy and glee.

Lambs are skipping o'er the grass— Pretty, playful as they pass; The animals seek the shady dell And drink the water from the well; Children, playful, dancing by, Pick the flowers and berries nigh.

Insects, flies and buzzing bees— Lovely butterflies we see. We shall seek the pleasant shade And praise our God, who all hath made— Scents of summer, oh! so fair! What shall now with it compare? F. F.

Four Stages in Life.

Born to my mother on this my natal day, What may be my future 'tis impossible to say; But showered now with love, and many and many a kiss, I lay at mother's breast in sweet felicitous bliss.

Two and twenty summers, have I now left behind; Pursuing hard my studies to cultivate my mind, The zenith of man's happiness, reached in this mortal life,

Is to follow my example and possess a loving wife. Several years now later, I've a happy cheerful nest Of the sweetest little children, with which our home is blest;

The elder ones maturing, themselves to meet their fate In the trial and battles of 'tis world, whatever be their share.

Not long ago today, I laid my wife low in the soil, And I myself am worn out, I'm done with earthly toil.

My hair is white and scanty, though my beard is yet still gray, How long this world is meant for me 'tis hard for one to say! HARCOURTS.

A June Song.

O, magical, glad and fair Is a morn in the birth month of June, Where the song-birds awaken the breeze, And the perfume of flowers fills the air; Where the roses dance glad to the tune Of the brook, and the birds, and the bees!

O, filled with melody rare Is the murmurous song of the sea, As its wavellets lap soft on the shore Fondling pebbles and shells lying there; While, commingling in sweet harmony, From afar sounds the plash of an oar!

But fairer than fairest June day With sunshine and song brimming o'er, More thrillingly sweet than the lay Sung by sea to its listening shore, Are the blush of the maiden when Love pleads his part, And her low murmured "yes," to the knight of her heart. EBBERT GRIMWOLD.

Deliver Us From the Evil One.

St. Matthew, vi, 18. Who can withstand the subtle tempter's power, Malicious, cold, so busy every hour, Each art to ply, each weakness to discern, Within the heart, when lust and passion burn, E'en they who lead and guide in paths of peace, Fall sadly, O how sadly fall from grace.

At his behest, his sovereign command A wretched woman's cruel heart and hand An infant strips, applies the striping brand O retribution where was then thine ear, Deaf and heedless of her departing soul! O, God of love, O Jesu Saviour dear, She is with Thee safe, safe within Thy fold Let each be warned in time and strive to know, The weakness lurking and resist the foe, With charity for all, for all are weak, Our own way heed the good of others seek. CHARITY.

The Valleys of Our Pilgrimage.

"The city lieth low, in lowest place," So speak we as the Hand of God still leads Adown the heights, to calm sequestered noads Held in the Everlasting Hill's embrace: The valleys of our pilgrimage we trace With faltering step; yet for our many needs, As light to shade, and joy to grief succeeds, Berachah's blees-ing Bacca's tears efface;

And Achor's rest and hope fill all the plain, Feasible fruits of righteousness abound, While from the soil "mEEK, fragrant flowers up-spring Unseen in loftier regions; and the rain "Falls softly here;" till with their harvest crowned These valleys shout for joy, they also sing!

My Love Has Died.

Among the flower-decked path, My love she trippeth, So fair to see; With slender form, and lips rose-red, And queenly carriage of her head, My love she trippeth.

The flowers are withered and dried, And the wind goes sighing by, My love has died; Along the path the mourners come, Bearing my beautiful silent one, My love has died. YOLANDE.

How the Most Simple Appliance is Most Effective in its Work.

Considering the number of vessels which have to pass it, the New Jersey coast is the most dangerous on the continent, and many ships go ashore on the shelving sands there every winter, says the New York Sun. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, however, the surf will admit the launching of lifeboats, and the surfmen bring ashore the shipwrecked in this way. It is only when a great storm is raging and the surf is so rough as to baffle the skillful oarsmen that the gun and breeches buoy are resorted to. This does not happen very often.

When the patrol sees a vessel aground or in danger he hurries to the station and gives the alarm. The surfmen are out in a jiffy. They always take all their apparatus, so as to be ready for any emergency. The lifeboat cannot be launched through the surf, they bring out the Lyle gun. This is a small brass cannon, which has a projectile fitting over the barrel like a sheath over a sword. To the projectile is fastened one end of a stout cord. The gun is aimed to throw the projectile over the ship, and thus bring the cord within the reach of the men on the wreck. It seldom requires more than two shots to land the cord. The sailors then pull it in and get hold of the rope to which it is fastened. When the end of the rope is hauled aboard it is made fast to one of the masts. Meantime the surfmen are burying a sand anchor. This is a great square of planking, whose surface grips the sand in which it is sunk. To it the shore end of the rope is securely fastened.

Then comes the breeches buoy. This consists of a great ungainly pair of canvas trousers hung to a circular life preserver. It is suspended by stout ropes from a pulley, which the surfmen quickly rig upon the rope connecting ship and shore in such a way that it moves freely back and forth. A guy line, one end of which was sent aboard the ship with the rope, is now fastened to the breeches buoy, and the surfmen pull on a line which starts the breeches buoy travelling seaward. As soon as it reaches the ship one of the shipwrecked gets into the pair of canvas breeches, sticking a leg through each capacious hole, and grasping the life preserver, which comes just under his armpits. He does not need to be tied in, for his seat is secure.

All being ready, the surfmen ashore begin to haul in. The breeches buoy rolls rapidly shoreward, suspended from its hump track. For most of the distance the man in the breeches is dangling above the water. When he reaches the surf, though he is bound to get a ducking. He holds his breath, takes a fresh hold on the life preserver, and in he goes. The next minute he is on the beach, where a dozen strong hands reach out to pluck him out of his canvas breeches. The buoy is sent straight back for another, and so on until all are rescued. A dozen men have been brought ashore in this way by a single breeches buoy in less than an hour.

It sometimes happens that a woman is aboard the ship. She may be the captain's wife. If the ship is a steamer, there may be women passengers. The idea of getting into this pair of canvas breeches may be repugnant to a woman, but she does not hesitate a second. Pulling her dress up around her, in she steps as unhesitatingly as though she were born to trousers. All she asks at that moment is to get ashore.

CRANKS WHO COLLECT.

The Fancy for Second Hand Clothing, Including Old Boots and Shoes.

"Some of the collections which are made now are very remarkable," said the proprietor of a London "curiosity shop" recently. "Everybody seems to be enthusiastic about something or other. I have commissions from a number of well-known people to use my business ability to increase their special collections."

"Old lace is of course no new idea, although the rage for collecting was never so pronounced as it is now. I hold commissions from three titled ladies for buying up any genuine article of this description I may come across in the way of business. "The fad for collecting dressing-gowns is much more original. This mania—if I may so call it—has really much to do in fixing the movements of a well-known foreign prince. I have known him travel three or four hundred miles when some dead celebrity's effects were to be sold, in order to have the opportunity of buying his dressing gown."

"Buttons form another curious item for collection. One noteworthy collection which recently came into the market was very complete. It comprised among others the buttons of officers in every regiment of the British army. It was unique in its way and could only have been obtained by the exercise of an amount of patience and perseverance which might perhaps have been better used. The army buttons number 148, and the owner wrote over 500 letters during a period of nine years, before he succeeded in attaining the object he had in view."

"Old boots and shoes belonging to celebrated people fetch very fancy prices, and there is quite a competition for them."

Very Dirty But Very Hopeful.

A man in this community has according to his story, been a great sufferer from rheumatism until twenty weeks ago. Then he met another who said that he had spent \$800 in two years for doctor's bills because of rheumatism and that he had found a cure in garget root as prescribed by one of the Indians that was with the colony of basket-makers on Cape Elizabeth at the time. So our friend purchased a piece of garget root, steeped it in water and took a spoonful daily. The rheumatism left him but it apparently came out through innumerable sores that appeared all over his body and were excruciatingly painful. These sores are now just becoming healed. The writer has seen the red scars on the man's arms and face. During these twenty weeks of painful eradication either of the poison of the rheumatism or the garget, or all, the man did not bathe his body. His physician told him it was safer not to do so. Whether he will ultimately be a well man is uncertain, but he is very hopeful. The relief from rheumatism is a great joy to him.—Portland Transcript.

A Fashionable Drink.

Menier Chocolate is a fashionable drink. Did you ever try it? Send postal card for samples and directions to C. Alfred Chouillou, Montreal.